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1. Mentioned in a letter of
J. Watson M.D. of Stockport

Business Applications

BRITANNIA's

THE CHURCH

ADDRESS **TO HER** **PEOPLE.**

PEOPLE.

Britannia's Address to her People.

MY CHILDREN,

BEWARE of that perfidious, blood-thirsty nation, the *French*; the source of every evil you have experienced for a century past.—Again, I say *beware*. Recollect, that during all that period they have unprovokedly, either harassed you with wars, exhausting your treasures, and imbruining their hands in the blood of your parents or relations, or kept you in the intervals of war, under the constant apprehensions of it. These wars, and rumours of wars, have been the sole source of all the *taxes* you are burthened with, and of the *heavy debts* you have contracted. It was *France* that received that bigot to Papism, *James the Second*, when he abdicated the throne, and in whose cause they plunged us into a ten years war. It was the *French* who made this island the seat of war and rebellion in 1715 and 1745, to compel us to receive, as our kings, *the two last Popish Pretenders*. It was by the treachery of the *French* that the late *civil wars in America* were fomented and continued; where *father and sons* mixed in common battle and discord, shedding *each other's blood*. The *French*, not civilized like you, but the bulk of them ferocious and cruel (the natural effects of their bigotry to the *Popish faith*, whose principles dictate murder and destruction to all who dissent from its tenets and doctrines) have at length been taught, by the valour of your fleets and armies, to abandon their attempts of subjugating you by force to *their slavish yoke*. They now, therefore, conspire against you with far more dangerous weapons than an open war.

They are *combined* with the wicked part of my people, and are attempting to ensnare you into their traps by crafty wiles, tricks, and devices. To effect their purposes the better, they have given to some *large bribes*, and have flattered and deceived that old leaven of unrighteousness, the gloomy and malignant *Presbyterian*, with promises of placing and supporting him at the head of the Republican Government, as soon as it can be effected, making that sect your masters and tyrants. I do not mean in the list of those I call *Presbyterians*, to include any sect of *Dissenters*, except the descendants of that remnant who escaped the general exile of the *Regicides of Charles the First*, and contrived to remain here, or to return after the Restoration of his son. It is by these bribed and wicked *traitors to their country*, encouraged, if not assisted, by that description of *Presbyterians* I have named, that the efficacy of our constitution is now threatened and evidently in danger, *but by your vigorous and timely resistance*, of being overturned; a constitution so framed by the *wisdom* of your ancestors, and improved by *time* and *experience*, as to secure to my people, as long as it remains uncontaminated and unshaken, in the most perfect enjoyment of true *liberty* and *equality*, and every other blessing in life.

Alas! that I should see the day that the *British constitution*, that sacred *palladium* of *Freedom* and *Equality*, the only *protector* of *property* and of the real *rights of man in a civilized state*, thus attacked by vile *incendiaries* at home, united with the worst part of our *ancient enemy* on the continent; and to see attempts made to substitute in its place the same wicked system (a mockery to all true government) by which **OLIVER CROMWELL**, and his *unprincipled associates*, trampled *Liberty* under foot, and for a short time *tyrannized* over my people. For they (as hath been just now done in France, under pretext of *grievances* that might have been easily remedied in a constitutional way) betrayed and imprisoned their *King*, sold all his *lands* and other effects, confiscated the possessions of the *Church*, turned out the *Clergy*, and reduced them to beggary and want; destroyed the *House of Lords*, and made themselves a *perpetual Par-*

liament, and the sole tyrants of the land. Thus it was here in 1649, and thus it is at this moment in France. The French, to gain their ends, will smile and flatter, but be assured *death* and *destruction* sit on their lips. Unequal to the bravery of my children in the open field, the game they are now playing is to *undermine* you. If you doubt it, let their conduct in the dominions of the *Emperor of Germany*, and the *King of Sardinia*, admonish you in due time. By their *decrees* they have as insidiously as unequivocally disavowed all *conquests*, all *wars* against their neighbours, all *extension of power* and *dominion*; but, under *cloak* of giving succour to those who ask for *freedom* and *equality*, they have entered the territories of their neighbours *with the sword*, have laid their countries *waste*, seized the *corn* of the Farmers, imprisoned the most respectable of the *inhabitants*, and *banished*, or cruelly *assassinated* the innocent *Clergy*; nothing but *rapine* and *desolation* attending their footsteps. Even at Brussels, that lately favoured city of their conquests, who received them as friends—no sooner did the people attempt to assemble for the purpose of agreeing how to represent in an humble manner, the *heavy grievances* they sustained by *murders* and *pillage*, by the *violation* of the *chastity* of their *wives* and *daughters*, and other enormities committed by the *French Soldiers*, than their *General*, disregarding all his solemn pledges of protection to their persons and property, issued his tyrannous *Edict*, forbidding the *citizens* to assemble under any pretence, on pain of *death*. Such are the men, which the wicked amongst you would persuade you, are acting in favour of *universal liberty*. With them, *liberty* means *ruin* and *plunder*; that is, liberty for themselves, to deprive you of your *freedom*, rob you of your *property*, and divest you of *honor*, and finally your *lives*.

Their first grand object is to *weaken* the hands of the *British Government*, and, having effected that, their next step is, to introduce their *soldiers* amongst you by *degrees*, in *small bodies*, until they can safely *rendezvous in arms*, prepared for them by their associates; and you will then become as easy a prey to them as *Brussels* and *Antwerp*, and like them

you will be emancipated. To open the door more easily, they tell you that *France* is become *free*, and invite you to partake of its blessings. Yes, *France* is free, with a vengeance; for all *civil government, order, rank, subordination, law, industry, commerce, and civil society*, are driven from the land. The *son* is no longer subservient to the chastisement of the *father*, nor the *apprentice* to the *master*; every man fears and suspects his neighbour. *Murder, rapes, and robberies*, stalk over the country uncontroled and triumphant, while the virtuous *King*, his *Queen*, and their *babes*, are languishing and starving in *dungeons and irons*, and their *nobles* and *judges* massacred in prisons, or driven into foreign countries, and their properties and estates confiscated by the lawless plunderers.

Such is the state of *France*, and without a firm, manly resistance to the associations now forming against you, under false colours and pretences, and by the *false names* of *Constitutional Societies, Friends of the People*, and other appellations adapted to *catch your ears* and *entrap your understandings*, such will soon be the state of this country. For, through the wisdom of your ancestors, are the *powers* necessary for preserving order in a *free state*, so equally balanced between the *people* and the *crown*, that the moment any innovation is made, or change effected, except by the common consent of the three estates, and that under the most delicate guards and restrictions; I say, that when the scale shall be made to preponderate either way, by force or violence, from that *important moment* your *liberty* is at an end, and those very *armies* who are now desolating the countries of *Savoy* and *Flanders*, will raise up here to compleat your *ruin*. In vain will it then be for your unhappy *wives* and your *daughters* to look up for aid against the *brutality* and *butchery* of those *inexorable foreigners*, who are equally strangers to your *language* and *customs*, as they will be to the calls of *humanity* and *mercy* in their distresses. Let the *Presbyterian* of the *old leaven* consider this and tremble. He will then be the first to feel the *vengeance* of *French bigotry* and *French perfidy*.

To such as have been already misled from their duty, by the specious pretext of reforming and improving our *legislature* and *laws*, in order that they may more nearly approximate to the new-fangled *mockery* of government in *France*, I will give the state of that country and this, as they lately stood in contrast with each other, that you may see the glaring difference, and how well adapted are our *laws* and *constitution*, whilst they are suffered to remain uncontaminated by savage marauders, to all the purposes of *happiness*, and that they are neither more nor less than what the *French* themselves had vainly hoped they should obtain by their *first revolution*.

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In *France* the *King* alone made, and at his pleasure, annulled the *laws*.

In *France*, the *King* alone taxed the people.

In *France*, the *King* applied the taxes according to his own pleasure.

The *King of France* raised and maintained *fleets and armies* at his pleasure, and was under no limitation or restraint as to their *numbers, or expence*.

In *France*, the *King* imprisoned whom he pleased; and, the prisons were kept locked by his officers, so

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In *Britain*, the *whole Parliament*, the *King*, the *Lords*, and the *Commons*, must all assent to the making or annulling any *law*.

In *Britain*, the *House of Commons* give the *taxes*, and they must afterwards be assented to by the *King* and *Lords*, before they can be collected or levied.

In *Britain*, the *House of Commons* alone apply taxes to the uses for which they are raised.

In *Britain*, both the *number and the expence of the fleet and army* depend solely on the *annual vote of the House of Commons*.

In *Britain*, no man can be *imprisoned* but in the *ordinary course of justice*. The *prisons* are in the *hands of*

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that no man could have access to his friends, nor was the *prisoner* permitted to know his *accusation*, nor for *state affairs* could he compel either a *trial* or his *liberty*.

In *France*, the nobility were *exempt* from taxes, and might commit many *great enormities* against the *inferior people* without *punishment*.

In *France*, for every article of life, particularly for all *flesh, fish, poultry, fruit, corn, flour, and garden stuff*, brought into the *markets* for sale, a *tax* is paid to the *government*.

In *France*, no provision is made for the *orphan*, the *crepit*, the *aged*, or *poor persons* of any description.—They all become *beggars*, starve and die. What will then become of the poor, when the *French laws* prevail in *England*?

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the *civil authority*; no man is denied access. Every *prisoner* hears his *accusation* read by the *magistrates* before his commitment, and he is brought regularly to his trial in a *short time*; and every *prisoner* is also entitled to his *Writ of Habeas Corpus*, that great *bulwark* of *British liberty*, unknown in the *regions of France*.

In *Britain*, the taxation is universal upon the *nobility* and all *ranks alike*, and the *laws* for protection of *persons and property* from *violence and plunder* makes no distinction between the *prince* and the *labourer*; and in this the *equality* of our *laws* consists.

In *England* no tax is paid for *any one* of these *necessaries of life*.

By the *humanity* of the *English laws*, every *person* is obliged to contribute in proportion to his *wealth and condition* to the maintenance of *all the poor* of the *land*, and it is by choice, and not of *necessity*, that a *beggar* is seen here.

These, my children, are the fruits of the valour and patriotism of your ancestors. Let me again seriously caution you, how to trust to the visionary projects of those who, under pretext of amending your condition, are for *reforming*, as it is called, your *Parliament*, altering your laws, and levelling all distinctions. The condition to which the *French* have reduced *Savoy* and *Flanders*, as well as *their own country*, ought to be a lesson to you, and warn you of the impending dangers of *any innovation or change*, not jointly sanctioned by the *King, Lords, and Commons*, on their own voluntary incompulsive movement.

Are you prepared to change your *Religion* for *Popery*? Or take the alternative of *burning at a stake*, or being *hanged on a lamp-iron*? Are you prepared to embrace the *laws* of *France*, and to become like the *peasantry of France*, the *feudal servants* of new *masters*, accustomed to countries where *villainage, bondmen*, and *native slavery* are, and ever have been, the badges of the inferior order? I hear your answer as in one voice, spurning the idea with contempt and indignation. Let me then, once more, *solemnly caution* you, let me again *most earnestly exhort* you to oppose, with the *fortitude* of your *forefathers*, becoming *free-born Britons*, the wicked measures of those *infidious men* about you, and the *pernicious doctrines* which they are disseminating *to your ruin*. Suffer no *innovations* nor *changes* to be made in your *Constitution*, your *Laws*, or your *Religion*. They are your *Birthright*, and in their *defence* resolve to live *free or die*.

BRITANNIA.